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Uncle Mort from the Randalls

Uncle Mort

From the

Randalls

Dear Uncle Mort:

The children would like it so much if you would write about yourself in this book and express your ideas so they could read it and derive benefit from these later when they can understand better and appreciate. Much love from us all.

Ferris Sr.

Dear Ferris

I am happy to have done this. And it is written so poorly that I am afraid you cannot read it. I have a lame wrist because of war.

The Willows, January 2, 1924, to the Randall Children who, at this writing, are in Chicago and have asked me to write my recollection.

Well, to begin, I was born in the City of New York at Twenty-Six Beekman Street on the 18th of October 1839. My father was Augustus W. Leggett, son of William H. Leggett and Margaret Wright, my mother was the daughter of Doctor Valentine Seaman and Annie Ferris. They were all born in Westchester County, New York. The old Leggett farm was settled by Gabriel Leggett in 1661 and remained in the family until about sixty years ago. Now the farm is a part of New York City. The Ferris family settled on a farm called Throgs Creek Run in 1660 and the Ferris family held the property and lived there until about twenty-five years ago. It is now a part of New York City. My parents lived in Beekman Street for several years, my brother, Percival being born there. My father was in business in New York and his health was failing him. They moved on a farm in Peekskill where my brother William was born. I was only three years old at the time yet I remember several things that happened at that time.

Peekskill was at that time a pretty little town on the Hudson River. I remember my mother saying they had an old neighbor that used to beat father out of anything he could and I think his wife did the same with mother. He had an old mare named Jimmy that used to take us across county to grandfather's fifty miles away. It would seem funny to take that same trip now for at that time it was an open county but now it is almost a solid city.

We lived in Peekskill for five years and there father bought a farm in Roslyn, Long Island. Here he improved in health and in a few years started a newspaper called the Plaindealer. I worked for two years as a janitor in this office. I must speak to you of your great grandfather's home (William H. Leggett). It was situated on the East River ten miles

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from the City Hall in New York. There were sixty acres in the farm and had a frontage of half a mile on the East River. The house was a colonial structure having a wide hall running through the center with a large wing on one side. The family was noted for their hospitality and as grandfather had a large family and having such a large house and as some of his children with their wives, children and nurses lived with him, and all their other children came often why as a consequence the house was always full. Grandmother was a great housekeeper and with servants plenty kept things going in fine shape. The servants consisted of a cook, a helper for the cook, a tailor, a washerwoman and ironer, a chambermaid. Thus grandfather's help was a farmer and a helper to the farmer, a gardener and a helper, a coachman and stable boy. Grandfather always kept a stable full of blooded horses and carriages of all makes and the very best. There were two front doors and his driveway was a road covered with white pebbles about six inches thick on the road so that you could hear a carriage coming as the stones did not pack. Grandmother was so methodical, had an hour set for every kind of work done. At a certain item, the gardener came with a great basket of flowers which grandmother always arranged. And as they had a large greenhouse were never out of flowers. Grandfather was a great lover of music and so after tea we would get in the big parlor and as nearly all the boys played some instrument, he soon had an orchestra although none was professional. I am being able to play the flute and grandfather the big drum and the music we made sounds good to me tonight. Grandfather tried to make good musicians of his children and his grandchildren but never succeeded. He gave all his granddaughters pianos and paid their teachers. The only ones that made professional was William H. Leggett and May Leggett-Abel. They often had large parties at grandfather's and when they did the great wash house was cleaned out and all the servants and coachmen and their friends had just as good time as the upper crust. Music was furnished them for dancing and everything in the eating line. People at that time thought so much of their servants and the servants never took advantage of it. In the river were boats of all kinds, sail boats, river boats and large flat boats that would be safe for the ladies to go fishing. After we came to Michigan, grandfather gave three of his sons land and they built elegant houses. Grandfather had four sisters that were married and lived near and as they all had large families, you can imagine there was something going on most of the time.

My great-grandfather, your great-great-grandfather Thomas Leggett lived near and I remember him well. One night I went with my father to call upon him and his wife. The old couple were sitting by a huge fire place heaped with wood. The old couple were each smoking long stemmed clay pipes and a little nigger was lying on the floor by each of them. All these little darkies would have to do was to fill their pipes when empty and they would fall asleep and the old folks would kick them to wake them up.

William H. Leggett had six sons. Augustus (your great grandfather) Samuel, Edward, John, George and Frank, and one daughter, Katherine Marie. August had three sons. Mortimer, Percival, William and eight daughters, Margaret, Emma, Annie, Elizabeth, Augusta, Blanche, Catherine, and Henrietta.

Samuel had four children, Oscar, Julia, Ada, Alfred. Edward had large family and I have lost all trace of them. John had four daughters and I know nothing of them. Thomas had three sons, Howard, Charlie and William and one daughter, Florence, all living in New York except William who died years ago in Pittsburgh.

Your great-great-grandfather, William had three brothers, Samuel, Joseph, and Thomas. The latter almost gave his life to the founding of the free school and finally brought it about and had one started in Flushing, Long Island, and I attended it for two years. Everything was free, books, paper, ink, etc. Samuel Leggett was the one that introduced gas in the city of New York. I remember him well and the queer part is that gas has been in the Leggett family ever since. The first home lighted with gas was his and it frightened people as they thought the place was on fire and the fire engine turned out.

My mother's family, the Seaman's were four brothers and three girls. Her father, Doctor Valentine Seaman stood very high as a physician. One thing that immortalized him was going abroad and consulting with Edward Jenner and bringing the vaccine matter and introducing vaccination into the City of New York. And to show the people that he had faith vaccinated his own son in the public street with an armed force to protect him from the mob. There is a hospital in New York named after him which he founded and he also started the first school for trained nurses. He analyzed the water of Saratoga Springs and brought that before the public and his analysis held good today.

Valentine Seaman had three sons who distinguished themselves. Dr. Louis Livingston Seaman a very noted physician and surgeon was sent by our government to all the foreign bases
and to their hospitals to take note of their manner of treatment to the sick and wounded.

He made a report that several countries were way ahead of ours and was awfully condemned by our military surgeons, but they could not put him down and he has brought many reforms. He was a surgeon in the late war and in one of the battles that our boys were in he was the only surgeon to take care of them with hardly any medical supplies. He told me that many of the boys in the Cuban War could have been saved had they had rice.

The next son John when a boy went as a stow-away on a ship to China where he became a runner boy for an American tea house and after a few years became a partner and became wealthy. For a great many years, he sent us a box of tea for Christmas and since his death, his wife does the same thing. William, another son, worked in a rolling mill in Pittsburgh and discovered a process of running railroad irons straight but he died soon after and received no benefit from it. John Seaman built a beautiful home in Shanghai and employed Americans to do the work. When Kate and I were at the Chicago Worlds Fair, we met John Seaman and he invited us to dine with him at the New York building where we would meet his wife and adopted daughter. We arrived ahead of time and expected to meet people all dressed to kill but what was our surprise to find the women with long dusters on and John in his shirt sleeves and each carrying a stool to sit on when they got tired. We were greatly relieved and we found them just every day people just as nice as they could be. It only shows that wealth does not spoil all. He afterwards bought a

farm near Peekskill where he died. His wife still lives there.

Valentine Seaman, Jr. (son of Valentine Sr. above), John's father, lived to be nearly one hundred years old and was said to be the oldest voter in New York.

I think that I was about six years old when we moved to Roslyn, Long Island. The house an old colonial mansion with a great hall running through it. The house stood on a high hill on a terrace that had been dug out of the hill and away up this same hill stood the barn. Also on a terrace still farther up the hill was the farm which was level.

Oh! what a sightly place it was. Below it lay the village a quaint little hamlet surrounded on three sides by hills and on the north by Hempstead Harbor a bay that put in from Long Island Sound. The little village was old and most of the people seemed as old as the place. The paper mill that mad paper for Washington during his campaign on Long Island did business until a few years ago but the house that Washington made his headquarters is still standing and occupied by a school mate of mine, Doctor Joseph Bogart. Most of the shops are still standing. The blacksmith shop where I watched the old smith make tools for the 49ers when the craze was on for California. Well that old shop is still doing business and even the old bakery is still carried on by the son and the cakes and pies are just the same and taste the same. We used to hunt duck eggs in the marsh and trade for cakes and pies. But when I was there a few years ago and the son treated me to the sweeties, I couldn't go them, had lost my boy taste. The old grist mill with its own shop which still stands and this mill made flour for Washington's army. In the center of this place was a chain of small lakes and the village was built around them. This place is a paradise for boys. Swimming in the creek behind the grist mill a never ending joy for boys. Then skating on the pond. I must tell of a funny thing that happened one day on the lake. A couple of colored boys came on the pond and wanted to learn how to skate. We told them we would show them. They had skates small enough for Elrose and they wore a number 10 boot. We toggled the skates on them with strings and cord wood (sticks) and got them on their feet. They were so clumsy that they pulled us down several times. At last they said they thought they could stand alone and to our surprise started off at great speed and told us to catch them. And although there were a lot of us, we couldn't. I never saw such skaters in my life. They would dodge and almost lay flat on the ice, and finally go between our legs. Well we were sold nicely. It is a queer thing about the darkies. They might come on the hill with an old slab sled they had made and beat any of the high priced sleds on the hill. And when it came to dancing the juba why a white boy was not in it.

Talking of fun, riding downhill was the greatest. We had a hill on our place about half a mile long and we would race down it like race horses. Sometimes there would be fifty sleds and all trying to beat. The fastest sleigh on the hill was the cheapest looking thing and although there were sleighs that cost fifty dollars and made for speed, yet this old craft could skin em blind and got the name of "Bully of the Hill" and was never beaten. Men, women, and children would turn out and have a jolly time. I can feel it now. Another great fun was gathering chestnuts after a frost. The pods opened and the ground would be covered with nuts there, hickory, black walnuts and butter nuts. Our farm was covered with

these trees and we made quite a lot of money.

I made a mistake when I said the darkies beat all the sleighs on the hill, all but the old "Bully".

I must tell of a funny thing that happened one day on the little lakes. In those days boys were bound and to give their salaries to their families until they were twenty-one years old and often had cruel masters. On this day that I am going to speak of a poor little boy looked so pitifully at us as we were going skating, and as his horse had gone away, he went with us. The lake at the lower end was full of air holes so we took pains to show the boy all the bad ones and told him if his boss came on the lake after him to make for the air holes. Sure enough as we had expected, the old man had on skates and with a whip in his hand started for poor little Johnny. Of course, Johnny started for the poor ice and knew his road. The old man gaining on him, Johnny made a right angle turn and the old man making a turn to head him went kersplash in one of the holes and could not get out. We made him promise that he would not be cross to Johnny on that day or any other, and if he would, we would help him out. If not we would leave him there. He was only too glad to promise so we got him out and he was always good to Johnny forever after.

I have been all my life a great lover of horses and I must tell you some of my experiences. In the first place I want to ride down to grandfathers and it was some undertaking for it was twenty-two miles and I had to cross the East River at Hell Gate and then go up Third Avenue. I rode a little Indian pony, the handsomest horse I ever saw and the fastest–he was a racer. In coming home the next day I had great fun racing and had beaten every horse I met. But in going up Peekskill hill I saw a white horse coming down very fast. Here was my chance, I turned my pony around and we were going for all we were worth. I could almost keep up but could not get ahead. I found that I was racing with Lady Suffolk, the fastest trotting horse in the world. Barnum gave one thousand dollars for her when she died and had her stuffed and set up in his museum. There was a great training stables on the Long Island race tracks not far from our home, and the trainer had a son my age and we were very chummy. I would often go over there and his father would let me exercise some of the horses on the track. Now on this day that I am speaking of the boy's father, helped me on the handsomest horse I ever saw. He was a coal black stallion, after he got me on his back, he said Sonny, you are on the fastest three year old in the world, and when you get him warmed up you may speed him a little. Well it was some ride and this he fairly flew. This horse shortly after broke his leg, had become the sire of many of the great trotting horses of the day. Another ride I once had my uncles Ed and Sam each had trotting horses. So one Sunday their darkey grooms were going out in the country to give their horses a spin. The boys Perce, Edgar Leggett and myself were to follow on horse back. Now my brother Perce took my favorite and little Ed had a good horse while I was left with an old "Crow Bait." We started out behind the trotters. When we came to a paved piece of road the darkies started their horses. Perce and Ed had to run their horses to keep up but to my surprise my old horse kept up on a trot. I didn't say a word but when we got back to the village where the folks had gathered to see the fast horses come through

what was their surprise to see me coming in ahead. We found out that my horse was a run down trotting horse. Now I am through with my horses talk, only it made me feel proud to have ridden the fastest colt in the world and to have had a race with the great Lady Suffolk. My father was no hand for fast horses but my uncles were.

We had a lovely neighbor, a Mrs. Cairns. She was the wife of a millionaire and she was good to everybody. My mother's income was shut off at one time and we were having a pretty tough time. One day Mrs. Cairns came over and said to mother, "Eliza it must be hard for you to keep all your children in clothes and shoes," and while she was talking, she took mother's hand and dropped one hundred dollars in it. At another time we boys had been disappointed in going to the fair. She sent her coachman who took us and was given money to buy us anything we wanted. Blessed old lady.

We always had great fun going to the darkies camp meetings which was held each year in a grove. They had no set songs but would improvise. The leader would start and they would all fall in and really made good music but the fun came when they would get the "forces." Then pandemonium broke loose. Such shouting and remarks that were made. The ones that had it would be crazy, would run and shout and sometimes go head first into a tree shouting glory hallelujah. After the excitement was over all would quiet down and all go home and most of them would be backsliders the next day.

I must tell of a sail down to Grandfathers. A sloop was hired with its sailors and a party of young and old boarded her when the sails were hoisted and away we started with a joyous party and fresh because we went out of the harbor in fine style and were soon on the Sound. Here the water was quite rough and some of the party had no appetite for lunch. The sail down was delightful and we were soon at Grandfathers. After having sailed about thirty miles, Grandfather met us and escorted us to the house where Grandmother received us in regal style. Soon we were invited to the dining room where a grand dinner awaited us. After dinner a walk over the beautiful grounds and after expressing our joy of the day, time said when to start back. Soon all were on the boat, sails hoisted and we are off with Grandfather at the helm. Everything went lovely with a grand breeze until sundown when the wind went down and we found that the boat was drifting backward. So the only thing to do was to heave the anchor and we had to stay all night well out into Long Island Sound. At sunrise there was a little wind, enough to get into Glen Cove, six miles from home. The men went ashore and hired carriages to take party to Roslyn. I being a boy stayed with the sailors. The party had hardly started in their carriages when a nice wind came up and the old boat beat the party home. This was a good one on them.

I must tell you a little about the way that we could go to New York. A four horse stage would take you to Flushing where you would take a steam boat to the city. Another was to take a three horse stage for Mineola where you would strike the Long Island railroad that would land you in Brooklyn. Then take the Fulton Ferry from the city. The other two ways would be with horse or go afoot as the island is covered with railroads and trolley cars.

One of the great amusements among the darkies was dancing for eats. A judge was

chosen and two danced at a time. The music was beating the juba on their knees. It was great sport and they would dance as long as the eats lasted. It surprised me when we came to Michigan to find such a feeling against the colored people. Why we never had that feeling in Roslyn. As boys we played with them just the same as with white boys. And we loved our old cook Aunt Dorcas almost the same as if she had been our mother. We would throw our arms around her neck and kiss her fat lips and never think of her color. And she would say "Da Lord bless them children." Going to Quaker meeting was a joy and we boys would often walk the three miles to get there. The Quakers were so good to us as if we were men. Sometimes, they would sit out a whole meeting in silence. If any one felt like talking they could. The best sermon I ever heard was when an old Friend got up and said, "I have been thinking that the very best thing that one can do is to mind his own particular business."

One of the disappointments in my life was not to have heard Jennie Lind sing. The family that I boarded with in Flushing when I attended school there all went to hear her in New York. They said I was too young. I have never gotten over it. Another was not hearing Oley Bull fiddle when he was in Detroit. Isn't it funny how a disappointment will stick to you.

One of the things that I took great interest in was watching the building of sloops. Now a sloop is a small one-masted boat about thirty feet long and are made to carry freight to the small towns from the big city. As there were two boat builders in the place, it gave us a fine opportunity to watch and when it came to the launching, the excitement ran high. A company was always invited to be on her when she ran off the ways. The ways consisted of long greased timbers well greased and the boat was held upon them by props and when all was ready the props were knocked out and the boat began to move and increased her speed and when she struck the water she would almost bury herself. At this time a flag was hoisted, a bottle of wine broken over her bow-sprit and the crowd and the party on board. After this the sails were hoisted and a grand sail taken.

Now listen! One day I was not feeling well so I stayed in the house with Mother and I always felt that it paid to be a little sick for such a privilege. She was sewing carpet rags and I sewed too. We were having the best time a boy could have when Mother said she would have to go upstairs. I kept at the rags and got them all sewed, wondering why Mother stayed so long. I got my flute and played away little thinking what was taking place upstairs. Hours passed and I was getting anxious. At last Father came down and said Mother wanted me. I was soon by her. There she lay in bed and looked so pretty and happy I leaned over the bed and kissed her. When she threw down the covers and there lay the sweetest and dearest little rosy cheeked baby I ever saw. I can never forget my happiness and surprise for I had never dreamed that such a thing was going to happen. Well this little baby was your grandmother-to-be. And, as she grew, she developed into the dearest little girl and how we loved her. We called her Mamie and she was, always with us boys and it was a delight to have her. Uncle Percy always claimed her as his girl which made Uncle Billy and me a little jealous.

The friends that Mother had the greatest regard for were Mr. and Mrs. William Cullen Bryant. They were a lovely couple and so kind. They came to our house very often. Mr. Bryant spent the week in New York coming home on Saturday and generally bringing some illustrious people with him and Father and Mother were always invited to meet them. Mr. Bryant often stopped at our house and would play for hours with the little girls. Your Grandmother has been tossed by him many times. He would lie down on the floor, take the girls on his knees and give them a toss in the air. (He) was a regular boy. Mrs. Bryant was a lovely woman. She had five daughters, Fanny, who married Park Godwin, a very brilliant man, and Julia never married, who lived at home. Mr. Bryant is buried on Harbor Hill and thousands of people visit his grave each year. His house partially burned a few years ago and has been restored to its former beauty. This old house at one time belonged to one of our relatives, but I have forgotten the name. It was hard for Mother and Father to have left such friends when we came west and they had hosts of other congenial friends. I think it was a disappointment that mother never recovered from and that was in not meeting Margaret Fuller. She was coming with her husband and son from Rome and in sailing along the Long Island Coast, the ship struck a rock and went to the bottom. Margaret Fuller was recognized as one of the great minds of the world and was coming to visit a Mrs. Moullin in Roslyn and Mother was invited to meet her there. Her death was considered a national loss.

About this time father began to talk of the West. He had such a family that he thought we ought to have a broader field to work in. And as Father and Mother had so many rich relatives in New York who were everlastingly visiting us and eating us out of house and home. So the folks came to the conclusion to go West. Thus it came about that Father advertised to trade his farm for western property. Now it so happened that a man from Michigan was coming to New York and while in a harbor shop read Father's advertisement. He came right to our place, liked it, whereupon Father and Grandfather went to Michigan to see the property he wanted to trade. This consisted of a comfortable brick house and twenty acres of land in Pontiac, a large flour mill, a saw mill, three cottages and two hundred acres of land. Well they traded even. And when he got home all was excitement and the stories that Father told of the fine farms surrounded by lakes that were running over with fish and ducks and how the boys would work, one in the mill, another in the saw mill, while I was to be the farmer. And the wonderful things that were coming out of our work made us boys think that we were on springs and could jump into Michigan.

I think I must tell you a little about New York as it was when I was a boy. The streets were cobble stone pavements, even the great Broadway and they were so muddy that little girls would sweep a path across the street so that ladies could keep their shoes and skirts clean. There the only mode of conveyance was the omnibus. The city was lighted with little oil lamps on poles about five feet high. There were new high buildings then and the lower part of the city was the residence section. My mother was born in Beekman Street and lived there until she was married. Now that part of the city has great business blocks. At that time there were but two ferries that crossed the East River to Long Island

and to look across four suspension bridges, and subways under the river. In fact under the Hudson River and under the city. So when you took a train in the Pennsylvania depot you rode under the East River to get to Long Island, or if you wanted to go the other way you would go through a tunnel under the Hudson River. And what depots the Pennsylvania and New York Central have. They are works of art and as for size there seems no limit. I can remember when the Harlem railroad had no depots just dropped their passengers in an open piece of ground near the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge and such hotels as are there today compared to my boyhood days. I remember when the Astor House was built and the people thought it could never be surpassed. I stayed last year in the Pennsylvania hotel a couple of nights. This hotel has twenty six hundred rooms and a bath in each room and every comfort, a telephone, all kinds of railroad guides, needle and thread, and should you want your linens washed, you could just put them in a little receptacle and your shoes also. Then in the morning your linens would be back laundered and your shoes shined. Every morning a paper was shoved under the door and a great dining room was attached. This was some building. Don't you think so?

In my young days, a round building up Fifth Avenue was the water works and the Crotin River furnished water for the city. Today the water comes from the Catskill mountains sixty miles away and costs more money than to build the Panama Canal. What was country in my young days is solid city now. I remember Central Park when it was a barren waste, a mass of rocks with squatters' shanties on it, and pigs, goats and geese farms dominated now one of the beauty spots of the city. The place I enjoyed the most was the Battery. Here I could spend hours watching the boats. Here is where the two rivers meet, the Hudson and the East. The latter going to Long Island Sound and the Hudson to the ocean. In fact both go to the ocean. It is son interesting to watch the tides, at one time the water is going upstream and a few hours later going downstream. And the current is very swift on the East River, hence the name of "Hell Gate." Here we crossed to Long Island and sometimes the current would take the ferry boat two miles downstream before she could turn and work up into her stop. I got off of my track. I am talking of the Battery and what a joy it was to see a great boat sail in that had crossed the ocean. All the time I am speaking of there were more sailing vessels than steamers and to watch them coming up the "narrows" with all sails set was a sight never to be forgotten. And then to see them land and the passengers coming off, and the anxious look for friends, they expected would meet them and the poor immigrants when they would walk down through the lane of people that came to meet them as they expected and found none, to see friends who do meet and the affection shown melts you and you can almost tell the good news and bad news they are giving. It really is about as sad to see a ship come in with its great load of human beings as it is to see one go out.

The time has come for us to start for the West and there was great carrying on at Rose Bank (the name of your great-great-grandfather's home) and the packing up things and getting all the young folk ready and then the many consequences to take us to the city. Now I will tell you all that came with us. My grandfather and grandmother, my mother and

father and us eight children. Then my Uncle Sam and his two children and nurse girl, another two servant girls, Uncle Sam's colored man. Father's farmer, his wife and four children all had to get to New York to take the boat for Albany and at four o'clock we were all on board and soon we were starting up the Hudson River. And we all had a good cry as we bid good-bye to the dear old city that had given most of us birth, but young folks cannot remain sad for any length of time and the beautiful sail with those grand palisades on one side and the city and many towns soon took our minds off of leaving New York. It took us until seven o'clock next morning to reach Albany. The last time I went up in six hours. Well it was a delightful sail and the youngsters thought it was heaven. At eight o'clock, we took the New York Central for Buffalo. Here was another great treat going through the beautiful state. Everything was a joy to us, the rocks and forests with now and then along the Erie Canal the boat drawn by horses. At this time, the Central Railroad was a single track road and it was fun to go on a siding and see another train fly by. We reached Buffalo at ten o'clock that night and were hurried to the boat to take us to Detroit. I was sitting with the driver on the back. When we came into a drove of cattle, he gave me his whip and told me to get down and try to part them so he might drive through instead of driving the cattle. They drove me and I got lost but happily I found the folks and all was lovely. The boat at that time was small compared with the boats of today and this boat (the Ocean) had twelve hundred passengers on board besides all their freight and good luck would have it the lake was still but in order to keep the boat on an even keel the sailors kept rolling great barrels of sand from one side to the other. At that time, there were but a few state rooms and a sister of the Captain gave Mother her room, while we boys found a bunk down in the hold. We had two nights and the most of two days in reaching Detroit. The Captain said it was the largest load he ever carried. Boats now make the trip in sixteen hours with every comfort known. When we landed we were taken to the Michigan Exchange, an old hotel way down Jefferson Avenue which has long since been torn down and a great wholesale building put up. At that time (1852) Detroit was a small town, not a paved street in it, a plank road through the middle of Jefferson and Underwood Avenues. And when you got to Grand Central Park you were in the country with heavy woodland to Royal Oak. At that time there was but one small theater in the city and the City Hall was a small brick building with a market below. There were but two railroads. One to Pontiac, the other to Jackson. In fact, these were the only roads west of Buffalo.

After staying a few days in Detroit, it was hurrah for Pontiac. At that time the depot was where the opera house now stands and the train we took was called the "Tri weekly," for they tried weekly to make the trip. It was composed of a luggage car and one passenger. and both of these cars would not be as large as a modern car. The engine was in keeping with cars...had no cab for the engineer and no tender. The road bed was the strap rail. The way this was made, two square timbers were laid the middle of the track then a strip of iron was spiked to the outer edge. And as new wood is of equal hardness, the iron would soon sink down in the soft parts and remain solid on the hard so it was like riding over a country road. And should two soft spots be opposite and as the little engine had but two

drivers, when, and if, these two wheels got into these little holes, the train would come to a stop and the passengers would have to get out and take pinch bars and pry the wheel out. The only place the engine had for wood was on the step that the engineer stood on so he had to stop often for wood and also for water and often the engine could not make the grade then the passengers would get out and push. The seats in the car were benches running across the cars with a narrow way on one side and broad strips of leather for the back. The windows were very small and one had to stand on tip toes to see out. The man who named this road was Alfred Williams (better known as Salt Williams). He was a witty chap and a great stutterer. At one time a man was appointed to find out the casualties on the two roads. He came to old "Salt" who said he could only recall one and this was a middle-aged couple boarded the train in Detroit for Pontiac and died of old age at Birmingham.

Now our trains had brought us safely to Pontiac and when we stepped out of the car it seemed as if the infernal region had broken loose. Criers for the three hotels, and for the stages. Some for Saginaw, Flint, Lapeer, Rochester, Milford. These were the four horse stages and there were two horse wagons that carried passengers. We finally got in a bus for Hodges House. Our bus was a farm wagon with planks on the sides for seats. We were surprised to find so large a hotel and so nicely kept. We stayed here for a week as our goods had not arrived by this time and we were all crazy to get in our new home. So the old bus took us all up and although we had but little in the house. Although Father had traded quite a bit of furniture and the neighbors found out our predicament, sent in many loads of everything, food and bedding and we soon found out that we were among the nicest people. Martin Welsh and his family had gone up to the farm and were in one of the cottages. It was not long before our goods arrived. As they had come by canal it took time. The first Sunday the boys were so crazy to see the farm and mills that we walked up. It was a pretty good walk, six miles up there and it seemed about twenty back. Well we got there and how I cannot tell now for of course we knew nothing of the roads. And the roads at that time were very different than now. They ran through the woods often and not where they do now. We were going along through the woods and were walking up a hill when all at once we came upon the prettiest lake (Silver Lake) and we were overjoyed with its beauty and we went wild in walking along its bank to see the water alive with big fish. They came almost to the bank and as far out as we could see. I have never seen the same thing since. We kept on walking and pretty soon came to two other lakes. Never saw anything so beautiful as they were to me on that beautiful Sunday morning. We kept on going, not knowing where, when as we rose a little hill, the great old mill came in view. We then knew where we were. We met a lot of boys who had heard that the mill and farm had changed hands. So they were very kind, showed us the farm, the cottage and the flour and saw mill. We were highly pleased with everything and especially the boys who were so good and we were soon acquainted. It was now time to start back and we hated to leave the boys. Our walk back did not bother us as we knew the way, but four little willies got pretty tired. Of course we had a wonderful story to tell Father and Mother and told how delighted we were

and knew we would be happy there for they were the nicest boys.

Of course, our desire now was to have the family there, but the trouble was that w would have to have a house. So we all began to plan a house. I was sent up there to hel Martin Welsh draw stone. In the meantime, Father had bought a team of horses and a yoke of oxen. So we were prepared for work. Martin drew stone and I drew lumber an was not long before work began on the house, I boarding with Martin and going home Saturday nights. The house was to be a big one 40 X 40 and a wing 20 X 40. The main building was three stories high with a cellar under both main and wing. In order to get a site for the house, Father had to buy one hundred acres of land. Of course as soon as th house was finished we wanted to live there. So Father sold the Pontiac house to my Unc Sam and that made the coast clear. We moved up into the new house in May 1854 and how happy we were. But for all this we were all a little home sick for the friends we had l behind. Now it so happened that Father and I were in Pontiac one day and a friend that had made said that we should meet a family that lived at Elizabeth Lake by the name of Whitehead. They were from New York and while he was talking, he said, "Why there is Whitehead out there on a load of produce and I will take you out and introduce you." S we walked to the wagon and he gave the introduction. Mr. Whitehead said, "Is your nan Gus?" and Father said, "Is your name Al?" They both said yes and grabbed each other' hand, for they had known each other in their young days. My! What a meeting that was and it was soon agreed that the families should meet. So it happened that Mr. Whitehea and wife called and Mother and Mrs. Whitehead knew each other as girls and went to th same school at Greenwich, N.Y. What a joyous meeting. Thus a life friendship soon gre up. We were soon invited to their home and what a home it was. Eight young people an we had the same number. Well a friendship soon grew up and we were all so happy. At that time one of the daughters was with her aunt in New York and would soon be home and of course the boys were crazy to see her. For we knew she must be nice as they all were. Time did not drag after this. We were either over there or they would be at our house. At last the sister came from New Jersey and of course we were all anxious to see her and when we met we found her a charming girl and it did not take me long to know that she was the only girl that I ever met that I loved and so it happened that one day we took a horseback ride. We rode to the bank of a beautiful little lake in the woods. We stopped to take in the beauty of the place and we were on a little farm that belonged to m I thought now is my time to find out if she cares for me, but with all the courage I could bring to bear I could not say the words. So we rode on up to Lake Angelus and down in hollow surrounded by beautiful trees and on the bank of this beautiful lake I was brave enough to ask her if she would be mine and she looked me in the eyes and said that joyo word, yes! My! But I was happy. And going back home we took our time for we were in no hurry. Well this girl was to be your Aunt Jenny and a lovelier woman never lived than she. This was in the summer and the next spring we were married and started housekeeping in one of Father's cottages. Here we lived for several years. Cousin Will w born here and we were so happy but one night trouble came for the mill dam had broken

and all the water ran out of the lake. This was a great loss and it cost two thousand dollars to fix it up besides all the work.

About this time there were rumors of the Civil War and great was the excitement. Boys began to enlist. Cousin Perce came to me one day and said, "I am going to enlist but I want you to stay home for you have a family and besides you must take care of Mother and Father." Well, he went and gave his life. Johnny Cooper who was working for me at the time enlisted and left me in the harvest field and nearly all the young men went. And what an anxious time for us at home. Never knew what minute news of the death of some boy.

Your Uncle Percy Seaman Leggett proved himself a brave soldier (really too brave). He went into the army as a private and in less than a year he was a Lieutenant on General Kilpatrick's staff. At one time Kilpatrick called for a man to cross the Rappahannock River and go into the Rebel lines. Uncle Percy said he would go and go he did and got valuable information. Of course he was a spy and would have been shot if caught. Another time he and four orderlies were reconnoitering ahead of his command. His men stopped at a house e to inquire and Percy rode on. He came upon a rebel picket of five men who shot him to death. If he had waited for his men, it might have been different. He was over-brave, poor fellow. He was a noble man and we have always felt his loss not only as a brother and friend, but as an advisor.

I want to tell you of your great Grandmother Eliza Seaman Leggett, for she was a very great human. She was a great prohibitionist and was in touch with such workers as Randall Phillips, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Julia Ward Howe and Anna Dickerson. She was intimate with all of them and she visited many of them and many of them came to see her. She was interested in the underground railroad, as it was called, worked was as follows: A slave runs away from his master. He has been told what to do, he is to get to a certain house where he will be kept until night. Then the man of the house will take him to another place where he will be kept until night and then forwarded to another friend until he reaches Canada. We harbored many a poor run-away, although it was a prison offense to do so.

Grandmother was a very learned woman and had for her friends such men as Bronson Alcott and Walt Whitman, Louisa Alcott, and any number of others that I cannot recall. Had Grandmother not been hampered with a large family and a lean pocket book, she would be in the hall of fame in Washington after the Civil War and the slaves had been made free. Why the poor things had no money, no nothing so Mother set herself to work to see what could be done. And she started in Detroit what was known as the "Freedman Bureau." She was made president and she appointed people to solicit and the meeting place was at her home, 169 Elizabeth Street. It was a great success. Several thousand dollars was raised. Mother then got up a fair in Chicago with even greater success than in Detroit. Then she started sewing clubs and made great quantities of clothing for the poor things and this was taken up through the community so that they were soon in comfortable condition. Mother was the instigator of may reforms in Detroit. Dr. Farrand,

a prominent man and health officer of Detroit, told Mother he would carry out anything she might suggest.

At one time Dr. Farrand came to the house and told Mother to get on her things and go with him. He took her to the city prison and had her locked up in a cell with Sophia Lyons, a notoriously bad woman. Mother had a good time with her, heard her story and when she got back in the carriage with the doctor, she asked him why he did such a thing. "Well," he said, "I wanted to see the worst woman in the city and the best woman in the city locked up together." Mother gave all her energy for women's rights and how happy she would have been could she have lived to see it brought about. With all of Grandmother's literary work and reform work she never neglected her family. She was the most devoted mother to them and would sacrifice anything for them. "Blessed Mother."

Your Grandmother Randall, as you know, lived in Drayton Plains and I am going to tell a little story. One time there came to this house three of the dearest little children and we all loved them, but one day in the cold winter, the two little girls were taken sick which made me very unhappy. The had a poor cold kind of a doctor who was giving them no help. Cousin Kate called Dr. Bird of Pontiac to come and see them. He said he was so busy he could not. Cousin Kate said to him, "You come and come quickly for we cannot let these dear little girls and boy die." He came and he helped you and you began to gain one cold night. Cousin Kate said to me, "You go and hitch the horses to the bob sleigh and put lots of straw in the box and all the robes and blankets you can find for we are going up to Aunt Annie's and get those children and bring them down here for we will have a warm house and plenty of little things that might tempt their appetite." And then the little family was brought over to Uncle Mort's as fast as the horses could come. The change seemed what they needed and they were soon on the way to recovery. Blessed little children. Can you guess who they were? (Ferris, Elrose and Anita, circa 1919 or 1920)

Now I am going to say something of your Grandfather Randall. I was very fond of him and always enjoyed a visit with him. He was a highly well read man and had the brains to take in what he read and give it to others and I always felt well repaid to spend an evening with him. He had a wonderful sense of humor and would tell some of the most outlandish stories and would tell them in such a way that he would convince you that you knew all about the affairs. One time he told of a man that had committed some crime being chased into a swamp some thirty miles away. He made it so clear to me that I remembered it perfectly well. They surrounded this man in the swamp and he climbed a tree which he pulled up after him and was never seen after. I think I was sold. At one time when they were all living here, he would bring out a great roast of meat from Detroit. He said to me that it was strange that the Detroit meat was so much better than our country meat. I said of course it was, for the pasture was so much better in the city and I wanted him to ask his butcher which Avenue, Woodward or Jefferson, raised the best cattle. He cocked up one eye and said, "Oh! Well it had never occurred to him that all the cattle came from the country." (There was) Nothing he liked better than to get out on the little lake and get sun-burned. I have seen his back one great blister. He had a queer team of

horses. One was a little pony and the other a large horse. He had a great carriage heavy enough for four horses, but he would hitch this ill-mated team to it, pile all the youngsters in, and your grandmother and then he would pick out all the break-neck roads he could find and come home saying it was the ride of his life. He was a great lover of baseball, but could never catch a ball, nor could he even hit one. And should he by accident hit one, it would use him up to run the bases and the game was called. Well, you had a nice grandfather.

Now I am going to tell you what I have seen in the many trips I have had. My first trip was to New York with Cousin Will when he went to Paris to study the violin. He stayed in New York a week before he sailed and went out to Roslyn and Philadelphia. Well the time came for him to sail. I bid him good-bye and then got behind a door and cried for one hour. The next day I went to Washington for the first time. Then came home and put in three dull years without Cousin Will. The next trip, Kate and I went to the Columbian Fair in Chicago. It was wonderful. The ships of Columbus interested me and the Viking boat, an open boat and how she crossed the ocean is a wonder. The buildings were beautiful and so large. The main building covered thirty acres of land and all the others on such a gigantic scale and so beautiful. My next trip was with Kate. We went to Montreal in a boat. What a beautiful trip this was down the Detroit River, then into Lake Erie, then down the Welland Canal with its twenty-six locks then into Lake Ontario and down the grand St. Lawrence, Thousand Islands and through several locks. Montreal is a grand and a very solidly built city. It lies on the St. Lawrence River and has a background of Mt. Royal, which is said to be an extinct volcano. It is very high. Kate and I went to the top and the city below looked very small. This city is the head of ocean navigation. Kate and I went through on ocean steamer, the first she had ever been on. Coming back instead of going down that great mountain, we had to go up over it through the locks. In some parts of the canal, the locks are very close and the passengers would walk. We were going along and happened to look way up and there was a great boat almost in the clouds. After a while we were up there and that boat was down where we were. It is not funny that boats can be carried over a "mountain?" When we got in Lake Erie, our boat stopped at many Canadian towns.

My next trip was with Will to Philadelphia and how I enjoyed going through the old State Building containing all our country's history. The old bell that rang out the news that independence had been proclaimed. There were the old chairs around the big round table. The old inkstand and the pen that the Declaration of Independence was signed with. The great banqueting room where the first wounded soldiers of the Revolution were brought to and all the other rooms that were so full of history and the original Declaration of Independence is there. We bid good-bye to Philadelphia and went to Buffalo and took a trolley for a dock on Lake Ontario where we boarded a boat for Quebec. Again I had the beautiful ride through the Welland canal and down the St. Lawrence River. Will was delighted with both canal and river. I wonder if you know how a boat goes over a mountain by water. We'll say we are going up. The lock has two immense gates at each

end of the lock. The upper gates are shut, the lower ones open. Our boat sails in and we are about twelve feet lower than the water above us. The back gates are closed and the front ones opened. Then the water rushes in. Let in by opening little gates in the bottom one and the boat begins to rise and keeps until the lock is full and we are on a level to sail to the next lock. I got a little mixed. I meant to say that the little gates are opened that are in the bottom of the gates and they let the water in until the lock is full, then the gates are opened and our boat sails out to the next lock. The St. Lawrence has several very swift rapids, our boat going down and all. The government has made canals so that boats need not go down the rapids unless they want to. Will was so delighted with the Thousand Islands and when we came to the last rapids, the Lachina, our hair stood up, for the water is as the water at Niagara Falls. You cannot imagine a more hazardous undertaking than to go into that whirlpool. Our boat ran at the rate of fifty miles an hour and great rocks everywhere. With four men at the wheel and four below with a great rudder sweep. It would look as if we were heading for a great rock, when all hands would turn the wheel only to head for another great rock, and if we should strike one it could be good-bye John for nothing could save us. You will never hear of my going down those rapids again, no sir. We are now in Montreal and Will and I go ashore as the boat is to spend the day. We take a good walk around the city and up on Mt. Royal from which we got a great view of the city and the great river and also the Ottawa River which flows into the St. Lawrence. The St. Lawrence water is clear as crystal and the Ottawa muddy. The two waters never mix and in mid-stream one side is clear water and the other side muddy. Montreal is a very interesting city and built mostly of white stone.

We are now off for Quebec. The sail down the river was very delightful with the great ribbon farms on one side and the clusters little white houses, for all the farmers built their houses close together, I suppose in an early day for protection and also company. Every house had a wind mill and once in a while we would see great wind mills that ground their grain. Everything was white washed. We sailed under a great bridge that was to span the river but shortly after it fell and killed a great many men. We are coming into Quebec. The first we see is a great mountain. Our boat lands and we go ashore. The old part of the city is made up of very small houses mostly of stone and the streets very narrow and no sidewalks. While we were there they were tearing down the great wall that surrounded the old city. The new part of the city was modern in every respect. On the top of this great hill or rather mountain was the fort and back of the fort was the Plains of Abraham where a great battle between the French and English was fought and we saw the mount where eighteen hundred soldiers were buried. An immense hotel stands on this hill and an inclined elevator carries the people from the street below. This is a great old city and Will said much like some of the cities of the old world. We had not long to stay as our old boat was getting uneasy so that we got on board. Then soon we start for home and the trip was as delightful as going down. We made a short stop at Montreal and we passed many ocean ships on our way. It is so interesting always to go through locks and up pretty swift rapids. Well, we kept on going until we brought up to the dock that we started from a week before.

And after thanking the Captain and all the hands, we bid good-bye to Lake Ontario and boarded a street car for Buffalo and got there in time to take the boat for Detroit. This is a trip that I hope some day all of you will take.

I think the next trip that Cousin Will and I took was to the Buffalo Fair known as the "Pan American." This was a beautiful fair, not so large as the one at Chicago but more beautiful. All the buildings were so artistic and painted in such glorious colors and such water effects with electric lights. In fact the marvel of electricity is beyond me. We were in the church just a few days before Pres. McKinley was shot.

I think our next move was a trip to Philadelphia and from there to a little place down in the Lehigh Valley called "Mauch Chunk" a wonderful coal field. Here we stayed for a few days and saw some of great coal mines. This little city is in a valley high mountains on each side, and do not think more than half a mile wide. The Lehigh River runs through the center and the buildings are dug into the sides of mountains. A canal ran along side of the river and a railroad on each side and street cars as well. Nothing but coal everywhere. The old restaurant keeper showed us his storeroom. It was cut out of solid coal. You may have heard of the "Switch Back Railroad." We rode on it; a car is pulled up by machinery to the top of a mountain where the car is put upon a track and it runs downhill for twelve miles until it comes to the foot of another mountain, where it is pulled up again and will run downhill to where we started without any power. It was built in an early day to carry coal from Summit Hill to "Mauch Chunk," and the only way to get the car back was to pull it with mules. A stable was built on the back for the mules to ride down in. One day they forgot to take the mules which made the mules mad and all the coaxing would not make them go down after the car. This of course was before they had machinery at each end to raise the car.

We stayed in this little city for a few days and then went on to Washington then off to New York and last to Boston. How I did enjoy Boston so, for there is so much history there. We saw the old North Church where the lantern was hung out of the steeple if the British soldiers were to move and how Paul Revere was on his horse ready to warn all the people on his way to Lexington. That gave the minute men time to meet them and which they did at the bridge and drove them, the English, back and a grand monument stands on the bridge of soldier with gun in hand. We went in the house where Dorothy and note people were and they had get to get out in the night. The house is now kept as one of the historical places and everything is kept as it was at that time. We also went up on Bunker Hill and in Faneuil Hall. We took all day at Concord and on our way back we stopped at the home of Mr. Bronson Alcott and Louisa and passed the home of Hawthorne and Emerson.

Then we went to Salem and in the witch house and stood in the room where eighteen witches were condemned to be hung and were hung. Then we went to the house of seven gables, which in an early time was the home of pirates and we went through the private stairways only wide enough for one person to go up. It is now kept as a sort of museum. We then went down to Plymouth and stood upon the "rock" and took pictures

of it. So after traveling all over Boston and going through Cambridge College which finished our education, as we went through one door and out the other. So we can now s we have been through college.

I think our next trip was to the great fair at St. Louis and a magnificent one it was. Made other fairs look small. It was in full view of the Mississippi River and everything known in the world was there. Will and I put in a whole day in one building and found o later we had not seen one quarter of it. It was a wonderful fair.

Now comes our greatest trip. We started and went to Chicago, then to St. Paul, then to Seattle, then to the fair at Portland, Oregon, and then down the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco, then down to San Juan and on our way back to Salt Lake over the mountains to Denver, Colorado and home by way of Chicago. St. Paul is a fine city built solidly of stone and lies on the Mississippi River high up. It is the county seat and has a beautiful capitol as handsome as the Congressional Library at Washington. Minneapolis only ten miles from St. Paul and is a fine city and is noted for its great flour mills and fall the Mississippi; we took the cars at St. Paul for Seattle. A three thousand mile ride, a wonderful ride through Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Utah and into the State of Washington. It was a great ride over plains, mountains, prairies. Deserts and sage brush and cactus and rabbits. We would go for miles and miles without seeing a house. We went through the "Bad lands" and not far from the spot where Custer and his men were killed we followed a beautiful stream through the mountains. As still as a looking glass wi the great forest reflected in it and the great rocks with stripes of different colors.

After passing through the Rocky Mountains, we came into the Cascade Mountains and it was here that we got a grand view of Mt. Ranier. A wonderful old peak always covered with snow. A great camping place with a beautiful park at its base. We are neari Seattle now and I was really sorry that the wonderful trip is ended. Seattle is a wonderful city of 200, 000 lying on Puget Sound. One of the finest harbors on the Pacific Coast. T city is on hills and solidly built. This is a great lumbering city and also no end to the salmon industry. Across the sound is a large island, Vashon Island. It is on a high, rocky piece of land. We went over and found it covered with elegant houses. This is a port where ships are loaded for the Orient and it seemed good to me to see the old sailing shi and very few steamers. We went to a great forest of the Douglas Firs. We came upon fir trees that stood in a clump and so close together that we could hardly wedge through then and they were each eight feet in diameter. This is a great ship building place for the Government. Tacoma, a large city at the foot of Puget Sound and about twenty miles fro Seattle. Now we are on the train for Portland, Oregon, a ride of eighty miles and very delightful before we reached Portland. We crossed with our train the Columbia River on boat and were soon in Portland, the train going beside the fairground. Portland is a fine city of 160, 000, lying on the Wilamette River, ten miles above the Columbia River. It lie in a valley with Mt. Hood for a background. This is called the Rose City and well it migh be, for roses cover the buildings; coming up to the second stories are masses of blooms. The Fair is small but beautiful. The Oregon building is made of logs all four feet in

diameter and the garden of roses cannot be surpassed.

Will and I took a sail on the Columbia River on a stern wheeler. This was the most beautiful ride I ever had. The beauties of the Hudson were nothing in comparison. We sailed for miles through a lane with mountains on either side and in one place a sheet of water falling from a great height turning into vapor or mist before it reached the ground called the "Maiden Vail." He sailed up the river for fifty miles until we came to a lock which lifted us thirty feet to overcome a falls. Our boat then turned around and went back into the lock and was lowered to the river level.

This river is wonderful for its salmon and every way is used to catch the fish and so many canneries. The city of Portland gets its drinking water from the melting snow of Mt. Hood.

Now before we start for San Francisco, I want to tell you all I saw of your Grandfather Randall's family. Huntley, when a little boy, was very delicate and he spent about two years with us and regained his health. He was a dear little boy and we loved him. Ferris was his father's boy and were so happy in each other's company. Chandler was a holy terror. Just as kind as anyone could be but full of Hell. He could throw dice with Grandfather Thursday and was a hale fellow with everybody. Mort was a grand little boy who we all loved but always a great sufferer with headaches. Yet withal very industrious. Now what can we say of Elrose, nothing but good, for could anyone do a finer or more noble thing than she has done for you all? It is not necessary for me to tell you that you can never forget what she has done for you. And I know it will be the aim of your lives to always stand by her.

Your great-grandparents I knew well and your four beautiful great-aunts. All good people who looked upon your Grandfather Randall as their main stay and use to bleed him pretty freely. Your great-Uncle James Randall was a very high spirited man and was really the father of the grand Boulevard that is the pride of Detroit, yet he was ridiculed by the city when he proposed it. He was also the founder of the Detroit and Orchard Lake trolley line. His death was a loss to the city for he died young and to think it was hastened by the drowning death of his son, Tom. and he was never the same after. The son was duck shooting at the mouth of the Detroit River and it was never known how it happened, but he lost his life and I have forgotten whether his body was ever found.

We are now starting on a ship for San Francisco, a sail of eight hundred miles. We could not get a stateroom so had to go steerage (that is bunks down in the bottom of the boat, way below the water line). It was a glorious sail down the Wilamette into the Columbia and out on the Pacific Ocean. He stopped at a little place, Astoria, which was once a trading post of John Jacob Astor and named after him. This is at the mouth of the Columbia River. The boat took on a lot of lumber and soon got under way. The final thing I saw as we entered the ocean was a great whale that raised about thirty feet out of the water and was so near that I could see his eyes. The trip down the ocean was grand. The water perfectly smooth with fish jumping in every direction and the spouting of whales and with the rock-bound coast in some places the mountain of rocks were higher than the clouds. In fact, it is a rocky coast from the mouth of the Columbia River to the Golden

Gate. Just as the sun was rising over San Francisco, we sailed into the Golden Gate. What a beautiful sight it was going through that great gate made with a mountain of rock on each side. It was a grand sight and such a harbor as we sailed into–a great bay, large enough to hold the Navy of our country. I was highly pleased with the looks of this great city with its broad streets and large hills. Many of the street cars are drawn with a cable. Market Street, the main street, is very broad and the sidewalks as wide as some streets in New York. The "knobs" here is the 5th Avenue of the city. Such places as Leland Stanford, Macklyn O'Brien and the Hopkin's, the latter was presented to the city by a daughter of Mark Hopkins, and is just as the family left it, magnificently furnished and an Art annex attached with wonderful works of art. The banqueting hall was an immense room with a large oblong opening over the center and above that a glass sky light the same size. This house was made of wood and every room had a different kind coming from all parts of the world. All the rooms had beautiful mantles with exquisite hand carving and the moulding around the room had what the room was intended for. Great marble stairs and works of art decorated the walls. This house was on such high ground that you could look over the city and see the Golden Gate. The yard was full of marble. This house was first one of many on these "knobs" that was destroyed by the earthquake. Wasn't that too bad. Our next trip was through China Town. The Chinese own twelve blocks in the heart of the city. Some of their buildings were fine but mostly poor and dirty.

We crossed the bay over to Oakland. This is a fine city and almost touches Berkeley where the University of California in Berkeley is a grand place surrounded as it is on three sides by hills but with a grand opening that you see the great bay and the Golden Gate. This place is so sheltered that you miss the strong winds that they have in San Francisco. We found the old "missions" that they had built by some old Jesuits at a time when Indians were the only occupants. I thought as I sat on the door step what had taken place throughout the world, and when this great city was covered with tents by the gold seekers, as there were few houses, and see it today with all that money can do to make it beautiful, and its wonderful shipping to all parts of the world, and we might say a place of refuge for those who can afford the luxury of that glorious city. We went down to the cliff House this on the ocean built on an overhanging rock and near the island that has so many seals. We were there just as the sun was going down and we watched the hundreds of seals and thousands of birds getting ready for the night and just at that time saw a full rigged ship sailing out of the Golden Gate, a beautiful sight.

One Morning we got on a Southern Pacific train and went for sixty miles down to a place called San Jose a beautiful little city of 60,000. We were right in among the palms, elegant avenues of them. We were riding up from a little park and I was sitting by an Irishman as we were going through a lane of palm trees. I said to Pat how beautiful they were. When he said "but what are they good for, you can't chop them and should you, you can't plant them. And should you be able to, you can't burn them, so what the devil are they good for.

We are eating today and a lady near our table was telling of the beauty and love one

had for Los Angeles. She said she once dreamed that she died and went to heaven and in being shown around she came to a cell in which a beautiful woman was chained to the wall. She was shocked and asked the guide what it meant. He said that woman is from Los Angeles and if we took the chains off she would go back.

We took a thirty mile trolley ride through a (pg. 118 last line) orchard and great fruit houses where they were taken and dried. You will see acres of wooden boxes filled with the fruit in the open air drying as they have no rain during the summer and no flies. Coming down tho this place we passes the Leland Stanford University built as a monument to his son. We had friends in San Francisco who took great pride in showing us the city. We spent a delightful time in Golden Gate Park. A great outdoors for the great city, having 1200 acres and the finest collections of animals I ever saw. A marble music stand presented by the great sugar king of Hawaii is in a beautiful grove of eucalyptus trees. And the park was full of the dear little quail, so gentle they would come right up to you. I forgot to speak of the marble temple and amphitheatre of the University of California in Berkeley All the college exercises are held here. It is circular with stone seats around it. There is no roof over it like the coliseum of Rome. Maud Adams gave a great play here some years ago. We are heading for home and will take the cars to Portland, as our ticket is only good from that place.

We cross the bay to take out train and we are soon on board and have said good-bye to Frisco. We have to cross the Sacramento River on a boat large enough to take our whole train on and then we go sailing over a level dried up tract of land. Even the small rivers are dry. Nothing green but the leaves on the fern trees. We pass immense fields of wheat, some cut and others being cut. And they have great machines that cut and others being cut. And it takes twenty-six mules to draw it. All farm work is done on a large scale. We rode all day through this level piece of land and at last came to the foot hills, the forerunner of the mountains. It is a moonlit night and how grand the mountains look. We can see anything we want –profiles, castles with great battlements and the painted rocks and the quiet little river. We were sailing along among rocks and forest when all at once the great old Mt. Shasta came into view. What a sight it was towering up so high with it's snow-capped peak and the full moon casting its rays upon it.

I wonder what the old mountain would say could it talk there where it stood, monarch of all its surroundings since creation, little thinking of being encroached upon. And now the indignity of a train of cars with a noisy tooting engine running across its very feet. It si tough on the "old gal" but graces she will stand it. A little farther on our train stops beside a great wall of rock and here the melting snow from Mt. Shasta runs down and electric bulbs are all over these rocks and the water running through these lights is a grand sight. Looks as if the whole face of that great rock was ablaze with diamonds.

As we pass by the many places so familiar after reading Brett Hart and Mark Twain "Sutter's Beard" where gold was first discovered and "Spunky Point" where such yarns were written and "Leadville" where the miners thought something was wrong if one or two dead men were not found in the morning in the streets. We keep on going over mountains

through valleys and dear little mountain streams and once in a while a lake way up in the mountains. All at once our train stops and we find a wreck ahead and all have to get out and walk around the cars on a narrow path between the cars and Arkansas River 20 feet below and a very steep bank and horrors upon horrors we come to a carload of coal across our path and everybody had to climb over it. Old ladies had to be boosted over. When we got to the end of the wrecked train, we found a small piece of land large enough to hold the thousand passengers. We found we were in the "Royal Gorge of Colorado" and to help everything along, we had to stay there for an hour until another train could be sent in for us. In the meantime, a terrific thunderstorm came up and it rained in torrents. No shelter, no umbrellas and it was hard for the ladies in their white shirt-waists. It was a wonderful experience. Those peals of thunder that kept going around and around those mountains and to be in that great gorge, a lane as it was cut through those mountains just wide enough for the track. Yet in one place, a bridge had to be made the same way the river ran as the mountains were too close. What a sight to see cars going between those mountains. The wall almost straight up and down and of great height and the rocks of different colors. We got started again and I know we left one man fishing on the river there, missing the train and miles from any town. Oh! What a solemn place that seemed to me. Outside of our passengers not a living thing and nature left the same as at creation with the exception of cars, and it seemed beyond the work of man to overcome what nature had done. And I truly hope your children some day may have the pleasure of this trip.

We are underway again and are passing through wonderful works of nature. At last our train has stopped at Colorado Springs, the Mecca for the poor beings that have that terrible affliction, tuberculosis. So many going to this place on the cars that it made our hearts bleed.

As our train stayed some time in Colorado Springs, it gave us a wonderful view of Pike's Peak. We seemed to be right at its base, yet were told it was thirty-five miles to the top. It was raining and warm where we were, but it was snowing very hard in the mountains. I have gotten off my track as I started for Portland, Oregon and now I am at Pike's Peak and have put old Mt. Shasta on the wrong track. It should be on the one I am taking to Portland. I will have to move old mountain now. It will be a pretty hard job, but then I guess I can. I am like a great many others, got on the wrong track. Well the ride up to Portland came out all right with no events to speak of. Went to one famous lodging house and stayed all night. For here we are to start for Salt Lake in the morning. Our trip through Oregon was fine; it is a beautiful state.

Now, we are on the train for Salt Lake and we are going along the Columbia River with its great mountains that seem to be right over our heads and the beautiful river flowing near our track.

Our train stops at the "Maiden Vail" falls. This is a sheet of water that falls from the mountain top and before it reaches the ground it turns into mist. It is very beautiful. The river has all kinds of nets set to catch the salmon and great canning houses are numerous. As we say good-bye to the river, a great cloud appears. We think it snow, but no, it si fine

sand blowing up out of the river. Great hills of it along the railroad filling the track in so much that hundreds of men and teams are at work keeping the track clear and we were told that it would go back into the river when the wind shifted. We soon struck a level tract of country that was curved with rocks of all sizes and perfectly black. Our train kept on going over a great barren plain when all at once we came to standstill. A wreck ahead. Here we were with no living thing in sight; no grass or trees or houses or even birds and the thermometer 116. Here we stayed for twelve hours. At last our train pulled down to the wreck where two freights had come together and all the passengers had to walk past the cars to reach a train waiting on the other side. The sand was so hot it burned the feet of all who had on low shoes. We had to wait until all the express and mail was transferred from one train to another. Thus instead of getting into Salt Lake that morning, we got there next morning. We were charmed with the beauty of the city. It lies in a valley and is beautifully laid out with broad streets and a little stream of mountain water on either side. It has fine trees and the buildings are like other cities. We saw about a dozen houses in a row. These were for Brigham Young's numerous wives.

The old adobe houses were still standing with a great wall around them to protect them from the Indians. We went into the great tabernacle. This is an immense building and no nails used in the building of it. Raw hide was used to bind every joint. It is said to have the finest organ in the world and it was made by a cabinet-maker. The acoustics are so wonderful that we heard a pin when dropped on a table that was one hundred feet away.

We happened to meet an old Mormon, one of the first ones in there, and he was so polite. Took us around and told us all about their coming in there and how they had barricaded the town from some clan that was going to take Brigham Young. He showed us the only cannon they had and the load they had in it and we made up our mind had they fired it, there would have been nothing but dead Mormons left. But the expected foe did not come. He took us into a little museum which contained the things that they brought in when they formed the chosen spot. The "great temple" is a great work of art, built of white marble and very artistic in its design. It is for the high "muck-a-mucks." The ones that have not reached the high mark can't enter. There are several other Mormon buildings in this pretty little park with no signs "Keep off the grass."

Now we are going to take the train for Denver and our last trip over the Rockies ended here still. Crossing mountains and gullies where you could not see the bottom; through tunnels where gas from the engines nearly suffocated one; and where the track was so crooked that you could look out your window and see the engine and whole train; and where it took three engines to pull us up a mountain and sometimes we could get out and walk they went so slow, and sometimes you could see a great cable stretched across a great chasm on which a basket is pulled across carrying passengers. We are now in Denver and now past all the mountains. Denver is like all other cities, fine to be in and fine to look at and built to last. We were tired and did not see much of this city. Now we are on the train for Chicago twelve hundred miles away. We soon cross a level tract of country with nothing but cactus, sage brush, prairie dogs and rabbits. We rode for a great distance over

this great land. Only once in a while (did we) see cowboys with their herds of cattle or sheep. Our train kept on going through Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin. When we heard the brakeman say, "The next stop is Chicago." and the next night took a Michigan Central for Detroit and the next day we were home where the girls had killed the fattened calf and had the best dinner for us and we were all so happy.

Now my dear children, I have written this at odd times and I do not know whether it will be of interest to you, but I have taken great pleasure in writing it for it is really a history of my life. So I think you will know me pretty well. I have taken little pains to write of the different places I been and when you grow up, the changes in them and the comparison may be interesting. I have not mentioned the many times I have been to Niagara Falls and the number of times to the big eastern cities, in fact all the big cities of our country. And I have been on all the big rivers and both oceans.

Now all I want of you children is to be good and kind, for if you are kind, you will be just, and if you are just, you will never allow the enemy to have any place with you. Always keep the memory of your dear mother sacred and always feel that she is near you. And never do a thing that would cause her pain and never forget for one minute what your Mama Elrose has done for you. Let it be the study of your life to do all in your power for her, for what she has done can only be repaid by the greatest kindness. And your faithful father comes in for his share. Always be true and kind to him for he is suffering the greatest disappointment that ever comes in our lives.

I have always felt so sorry not to have seen more of your mother, but what I did see of her pleased me highly. I could see her great worth and I feel that she was a great loss to all. Always keep her fresh in your memory. Talk of her; tell little anecdotes and in this way the older you get the grander she will seem to you.

Lovingly, Uncle Mort
March 24, 1929

Mortimer A. Leggett

I am going to tell you a story that is true. One time your Grandmother Randall with little baby Mort and myself, started from Windsor on a Canadian boat for Chicago. It was Sunday and as there was a minister on board it is always expected he will be asked to preach. There began a hunt for someone to play the piano. Your grandmother offered and I kept Mort who squalled all the way up the St. Clair River, so hard that people on the shore cheered him. But I did not.

Your Grandma told the purser that I would play the fiddle if they could find one, which they did and we played that night which they seemed to enjoy. The next night, we played for them to dance and they went wild. They made such a fuss over us that we came back with them, and that night the dance was on full blast and afterwards I went up with the

mate up into the wheel house. I noticed he was very much excited having slowed down ti boat and giving orders very fast to the wheel man.

I found out the first mate had left his post thinking the other mate would be soon there. Thus the man at the wheel had no one to direct him and was out of his course an(got in among the rocks. After awhile, the mate got out of the dangerous spot and said, "Thank God, for we have been in among the rocks and I expected we would strike one a any minute." No one on board could have known this, and when we left the boat at Windsor, the Captain invited us to go to Montreal with him and said we had made his tri the pleasantest during the season. It only showed how fiddling came near breaking a boa

Now I'm going to tell you of a trip Father and I had in the north woods. It was in the fifties that the government of the United States offered to sell their wild land in Michigan for twelve and a half cents per acre. The idea was to get the state settled. The proviso was that the people that bought were to settle upon it. Now Grandfather (my Father) bought 500 acres for himself and 200 for each of his children, but the governmen would not let minors hold the land, but Father held his. And twas thus that we hired a m to take us out to see it. So, one cold winter day, we started out with a team of horses and farm wagon with no springs and we drover to Saginaw that day, a drive of seventy miles.

The next morning, we started again and drove all day over frozen rivers and roads cut through the woods, the worst possible, and by night we had arrived at the lumber cam The people took us in for the night and the next morning started again. Father and the o man on horse back and I on my own feet. We had to follow an Indian trail for twenty miles to reach the land and it was through a dense forest of pine. Sometimes the trees w(so close together that the horse had to wedge through the trail and the trail had worn so deep by the Indian ponies' feet and so rounding (p.148, L.8) that it almost used me up tc walk in it. The Indians turn their toes in so the hollow path does not bother them. We were going along nicely and had come to an open place in the woods, when we saw comin a great lot of men and dogs. They were Indians. When they got up to us they stopped a demanded whiskey and we had a good deal of trouble getting away from them. And as I was walking behind I thought I would be a gone one. My hair stood right up for I expect I would be scalped. Well I was scared but no harm came of it. At last we came to a river and the bridge over it was a great pine tree and the Indians had cut notches in it for foot steps. When we crossed the river we were on the land we came to see. The old man, "Josh Terry," and old back woodsman said, "Now I will build a house for you." So he took his hatchet and soon made what he called a house. Then he said get in there and I'l swear you built a house and occupied it. Then he said we must dig a well. So we hunted around and found some stones, he digging a hole with his hatchet and soon a well was bu We had brought some scrubby apple trees. We set them out so you can see that we had built a house, dug a well, and planted an orchard and had thus improved the land and in time got a title from the government. Thus beating the devil around the bush. On the other side of this river there had been an Indian camp and in a tree on every limb was a fine pair of deer antlers. We were told that the Indians kept track of the number killed.

this way he packed a lot on the horses and we have some in our house. I carried my rifle all that day, but saw no deer although the woods were full of them. Father and old Josh talked too much, scared the deer.

That night at the lumberman's camp, we were told that a few days before, an Indian had offered him a pair of Elk horns that were so large that when he stood them on their tips, he, a six foot man, could walk under them, and the Indian offered them for three dollars. We wished we could have got them.

Barney was fencing a poor and wet piece of land that was no good. I said, "Barney, what are you fencing that poor piece of land for? Why a cow would starve in there." Well he said, "I was fencing it to keep the poor thing out."

I (p. 152, L.10) once said to Barney, "What is the difference between an Irishman and a hog?" "Well," says Barney, "the only difference is that I am an Irishman and you are the hog."

How I got my first load of lumber for our house. I went to Rajera for the lumber and stopped for the night at a little tavern. I was acquainted with the landlady and during the evening came to me and said a party of young folks had come for a dance and the fiddler had failed to come and they were so disappointed. I asked if she could get a fiddle and I played and after it was all over the boys handed me money enough to pay for my lumber.

Old Joe Smith, an old Pennsylvania Dutchman was a great friend of your Uncle Percy. In fact, Uncle Percy was never satisfied if Joe was not in the company they would hunt and fish and (p. 154, L. 8) . When word came that Uncle Percy was killed, Old Joe went wild with grief, would have killed a horse that he was shoeing if others had not prevented him. I was at his home one night and he brought out all his children's photos for me to look at. At last he handed me one all wrapped up in gauze, I unwrapped it and it was a picture of Uncle Percy. "There," he says, "is the best one from them all. Oh my God! How I loved that boy."

Fred Barkman, an old blacksmith during our first days in Clintonville, the crudest blacksmith and dentist man I ever saw. He often said he didn't know how people could comb their hair every day, for he only combed his hair once a week and then it almost killed him. He told me one day that he owned three-thirds of a boat and was going to buy the other third and have a boat of his own. He once bought a piece of land, one acre land and thirty-nine acres water. He said in York State, he had to drive his cows three miles to water and was going to have a piece that had plenty of water when he moved up into Clintonville and build the finest house in the neighborhood and spent money so freely. People thought Father wealthy. Old Fred one day presented Father with a bill of one hundred and thirty-five dollars. Father told him he had made a mistake and could not pay it,, but said he would give him twenty-five dollars to call it square. Old Fred slapped Father on the back and said if everyone paid him like that he would be rich.

We had a queer old man, Gen. Ten Eyckd who joined us. One day I was shooting at a Hell Diver with my rifle. The balls would hit the water and glance up into the air. The

Gen. was salting his sheep on the opposite shore and I did not see him. Pretty soon I heard a shout: "Stop your shooting. I am not afraid of your bullets, but you might hit some of my sheep."

Rastas where you get that pretty stone on your finger? Well you see, when my mother-in-law died, she gave me twelve hundred dollars to buy a stone to her memory. Well, this is the stone.

One time there was a barn raising and after the frame was up, a great table had been set under the trees. Gen. Ten Eyck sat at the head with good Father Earl beside him. Of course there was great noise among the men. The proprietor thought it would be nice to have Father Earl ask a blessing. He asked the Gen. to quiet the boys which he did his way. He stood up and rapped on the table and shouted out, "Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye! If by the gods you will stop that infernal noise we will open this banquet with prayer!" A hush came and the Gen. tapped the good old parson on the back and said, "Proceed, Elder."

I was listening to a lawsuit in Pontiac when the principle lawyer was to make his plea to the jury in the afternoon. He spent the noon hour in propping himself up with strong drink and took a little too much. So when he commenced to talk it was of a mix of characters and the judge told him to stop and sit down, for he was intoxicated.

The man steadied himself on the table and said, "Is that the opinion of the court?" Yes, that is the opinion of the court. "Ad is that the decision of the court?" Yes, that is the decision of the court. "Well, may it please your honor, it is the most righteous decision that has been rendered during this term of court." and down he sat.

Two Swedes were walking along the railroad tracks when a train came behind them. One took one side of the track and the other failed to get out of the way. Arnie missed his companion and in walking up the tracks came upon a leg and further on an arm and finally to the mangled remains. Arnie looked at them, and then said, "I am afraid something must have happened to Ollie."

An Irishman told his son to learn to cut his nails with his left hand for he might lose his right hand some day.

An Irishman lay dying in the bed, his wife on the chair beside him. Biddy says, "Darling, is there anything I can do for you before you leave us?"

Pat says, "That pork roast smells so good. I think I might eat some of it."

Biddy says, "No darling, you can't have any of that for I am saving it for the wake."

Jimmy got on a wild colt by mistake. The colt plunged and ran. Pat was watching and as they came by him with Jimmy's arms around the horse's neck and his legs around his belly, Pat yells, "Get off! Why don't you jump off?" Jimmy says, "How the devil can I get off when it is all I can do to stick on!"

Aunt Kate just said to, "tell them about the Indians." Well it was no uncommon sight to see the road through Drayline Plains fairly blocked with Indians with their squaws and papooses and ponies that carried their tents and food. They were going to Detroit to get their bounty that the government gave them each year. They would camp near the lakes and would never interfere with anyone. There was a tribe of Indians on the Sashabaw

Plains and their chief's name was Sashibaw (Sisisaba) and one time while hunting on the banks of Silver Lake encountered a great bear and they had a terrible battle. The bear with his claws and the Indian with his knife. They fought until both were killed and Sisibaw is buried on the banks of Silver Lake and a tablet is to be placed on his grave. Years ago an old pioneer told me that for years the Indians came and put pipes and tobacco on his grave.

The territory of Michigan was ceded to the United States, on the banks of Orchard Lake and a tablet marks the spot.

The Indian trail from Saginaw passed through our farm, and in some woods around here the trail is visible. The old logs can still be seen where they forded the (p.161, last line) River.

I want to tell you of a picnic in Bryant's barn in Roslyn. The whole neighborhood had gathered there and everybody having the time of their lives, when someone shouted that an old Gypsy was coming up the hill. Sure enough, she was coming and the excitement ran high. She was driving a little donkey hitched to a little wagon and it was all the little beast could do to pull her up the hill. At last she landed and was joyfully received by the company. She proved to be a fortune teller and was soon busy and it was a marvel to all how she could read the fortunes so closely, would make few mistakes in telling who young people were going to marry. Of course all would be rich and so it went on until all were told and the old Gypsy took her leave with her baskets well filled. Well, lo and behold, in going down the hill the little donkey ran away upsetting the wagon and throwing the old Gypsy out. All ran to her assistance, where, to the astonishment of all, they found that the old Gypsy was a man and none other than Park Godwin, Mr. Bryant's son-in-law. And as he knew the history of all the company, he had no trouble in telling their fortunes. It made great fun and it took some time to get the money back to the right owners.

Mr. Bryant was a great lover of the beautiful and one of his delights was his garden. A tiny little stream ran through this garden and he thought a little waterfall would be an added beauty. So he told his Dutchman to make one and have it done by Saturday, the day he came home from the city. On this Saturday, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Fagent, the great actors, came with him, and of course took a stroll through the garden and when they came to the waterfall, John had made a dam out of a lot of old boards and taken an old boot leg and tacked it on for the water to shoot through. One can imagine Mr. Bryant's thoughts, but he let the Dutchman live.

When I was pretty young, I used to carry the papers to the subscribers. One day I was to leave one at the Bryant home, but as I got near the house, I saw Mr. Bryant on his big porch going through gymnastic exercises. I was frightened and did not stop. When I got home I told mother that Mr. Bryant had gone crazy and told how he acted. I was soon told the trouble and as it was too good to keep, Mr. Bryant was told and it amused him very much. He often wrote to my mother after we came to Michigan and always spoke of it. I think I was right for no one could do the crazy act better than he did.

One night I was with my father and mother at Mr. Bryant's. All were sitting in his library. Books circled three sides of it and a great fire burned in the fireplace. There were

no lights in the room. Mr. Bryant was standing with his back to the fire when Mrs. Bryant said, "William, perhaps our friends would like to hear you recite your last poem." I will never forget the scene, the glow from the fire lightened up his face and his soul was in his reading and the stillness of the room. No one seemed to breathe as that great good man gave that poem as it has never been given since. I'll bet I have forgotten the name of it, but I never can forget that evening. Some two years ago, Cousin Kale and I were looking through the gate at the Bryant home and the beautiful garden. Two great dogs came bounding out and with them a young man. We introduced ourselves and I told of my knowing Mr. Bryant so well when I was young and told some anecdotes, which pleased him so much that he invited us in the house and took us in the same library that I spoke of in the back page. I told him many things he did not know and how I had played with his grandmother and how I knew his grandfather. All this seemed to interest him. He was Bryant's grandson. We were told that few people were ever invited in the house.

My story has bout come to an end and its all about myself and I do not want you to think that I am trying to make myself a hero, far from it. But I am so glad to know that I am living in this wonderful age and can enjoy it. Think what we have at the present time. Take for instance our house and what we have in our living room, electric lights, telephone radio, phonograph, electric washer and ironer, water furnished to the houses, mail delivered at our door. the great pleasure, the auto (p. 168, L.21) (Thanks to the doctor) over the good roads, bringing far off places near, and the palatial boats on our lakes compared to the little boat we came to Michigan in, and the wonderful growth of cities. And through the radio, get the news of the world each day and the airships that are getting so common. And I might keep on for pages, but you know all that is going on. I am so thankful to think that I am living and able to enjoy all this. In fact, I never enjoyed myself more and never appreciated things as I do now.

Now my little pets, I want you to feel in reading this little book that every line in it has had a thought of you and although it contains nothing but plain facts yet as you grow older by referring to this book, you can see the wonderful changes taking place in our country.

With my (p. 169, L.13) love,
Your old uncle
Mortimer Allen Leggett

Written at the "Willows"
Township of Waterford which in the year 1924
at the age of 86 years

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